

# NORTHERN JUNKET



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# TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

I wish somebody would give me a satisfactory answer to this: "What has happened to our basic figure 'allemande left'?"

Oh, it is still being called and still being danced. But it has degenerated into a wishywashy sort of thing. Ninety percent of the time it feels as if you had a dead fish on the end of a line! When danced correctly there is a slight 'pull away' feeling to the figure and this makes it very easy to dance as well as being an exhilarating figure. The way most people do it nowadays it is deadening and actually hard work to perform.

It is not just a local problem. Practically all European countries have a hand-turn figure in some of their dances. The way I hear it is that the 'wishywashy' hand turn is happening wherever the figure is found.

My personal opinion for what it is worth is that it is not being taught correctly. What is needed is a return to the days of the dancing master - and the sooner the better for all types of dancing. For too long has square dancing been left to the teaching of callers who themselves were taught by other callers. Whoever told them that they knew how to dance let along being able to teach it.

And on that high note I'll stop and wish everybody a happy holiday season and for the year ahead good luck and good health. With all best wishes -

Ralph

# TRY IT -

# YOU'LL LIKE IT

by ANDY PARSONS



It looks like half time at the Army-Navy game. A public-address announcer calls the roll of 24 states and Canada, and their 100-odd representatives quickstep around the glittering Grand Ballroom of the Waldorf-Astoria, New York, to the rhythms of the Lee Castle and Jimmy Dorsey Orchestra. Cheers greet the name of each state. "This is a competition between states," leader John Monte announces. It's also a return to the past - and its advocates predict, a taste of the future as well.

The First Annual National Ballroom Dancing Championships are under way - or, perhaps, underfoot.

Remember ballroom dancing? A long time ago, people held social functions in huge ballrooms like this one. They would come together, make small talk and large drinks, and dance. The dances were traditional ones, in which the people danced with each other.

That was before rock. Before discotheques. Before the rise of the counterculture. Since then ballroom dancing has mostly been seen in Broadway plays, some old Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers movies, and some current Fred Astaire and Arthur Murray dance studios. That was before this past Labor Day week end, when you could spot the flicker of a dance backlash.

"Everybody has become too far removed from each other," says Monte, president of the American Ballroom Co., which was formed to run the championships. "Now they want to come into contact again."

And to listen to the rumors and theories here, to see the enthusiasm, and to talk to would name almost anyone

the people  
a believer.

Rock, the believers swear, is on the way out; ballroom dancing will become the new dance craze. People over 40 will dance it because they're more familiar with it, it's good mild exercise, it's good for a social life, it conjures up nostalgia, and it makes a good hobby. Those under 40 will be taken by it because they'll experience the euphoria of being with their partners and because it'll be new to them. So the enthusiasts say, anyhow.

Theorists on the renaissance of ballroom dancing point out that the "big-band sound" is becoming popular again and that the nation's 15 or so major ballrooms are beginning to revive.

Monte, who is also the national dance director of Fred Astaire Studios, says that in the past three years his company has almost tripled its enrolment: in 1970 it taught 900,000 dancing lessons in its 110 schools. "In the past three years," he says, "we have had more people under the age of 35 come into our studios than ever before."

And Frank Imholz, director of the franchise service program at Arthur Murray, the nation's largest dance school, says they've had "an annual increase (in enrolment) of about 15 per cent in the past six years." He adds: "As the discotheque wears off, the youth today being very dance-conscious, they'll gravitate to ballroom dancing."



Yet even winning armies need parades to boost their morale a bit higher. So, obligingly, the American Ballroom Co., conspired to give the dance form (and the dance business) a lift by organizing the championships. Naturally, they had the endorsement of the nation's major dance organizations, including the National Council of Dance Teacher Organizations, the Fred Astaire Dance Studios, the Arthur Murray Dance Studios, and the Dance Educators of America.

Never before had there been a U.S. dance competition that cut across the big dance-organization party lines. And there was prestige to the winners' sponsors and \$500 to the winning professionals.

In 1-5 p.m. and 8 p.m. - midnight sessions on Sunday and 1-5 p.m. sessions on Monday, couples competed in American-style ballroom, theatrical American ballroom, English-style modern, and English-style Latin dancing. They danced the waltz, rumba, cha-cha, slow and quickstep foxtrots, swing, samba, tango, bolero, and paso doble; a sheeuled rock competition was canceled when only two couples signed up. Entrants were divided into pro-amateur, amateur, and professional levels.

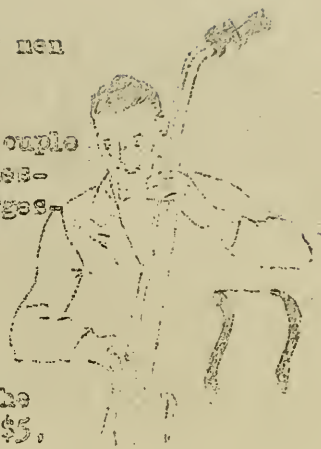


General dancing had been going on about 45 minutes when the pro-am competition got the actual championships underway.

Clad in tuxedos, accented in front by rich-colored shirts and in back with attached numbers, most of the gliding gentlemen were young, handsome, charming. Just like old times. Their partners were mostly ladies who would have made their social debuts years ago and who probably have introduced their beautiful young daughters to society by now. They were affluent middle-aged or older women, whose \$100 to \$500 studded gowns sparkled under the extra lighting and were changed for each

competition. There were a few older men with young women as well.

Havescropping, one heard a couple of complaints about the Dorsey Orchestra's beat being off. The scene suggested a college gymnasium. "We love number 39!" someone shouted from one corner of the room. "Let's go, 48!" countered a group in unison from the second tier. It went this way all during the championships. The 1,000 persons in the audience paid \$5, \$8, and \$10 per session to cheer on their favorite couples.



Eventually the judges' votes are tallied and there are tears of joy and sorrow from the amateurs in the pre-am. The dance instructors take their students into the lobby, where a cash bar is selling drink tickets for \$2.80 each.

One contestant, Harry Ragsdale, an Atlanta businessman, says ballroom dancing is his hobby: "I just love to dance. It relaxes me from the work I have to do and it's good exercise too." He took up ballroom dancing several years ago after being invited to a Fred Astaire studio party. Why not rock? "It's another generation. I have to admit I don't quite have the feeling because I didn't start off with it."

The amateur competitions follow, but only three couples are entered. Then the junior amateurs, for kids aged 14 to 17, with seven competing couples - all from the New York area.

Norma Quirk is from Woodridge, N.J. and is 15. She likes ballroom dancing because "it's different. Not many people do it." More than rock? "I like the rock music better, but this is a change. I like them (rock and ballroom) the same but in different ways."

The professional heats are on now, and the dancing is a lot slicker. The audience is standing as much as it is sitting; the cheering is more spontaneous.

Margo Rodriguez, a professional stage dancer, is among the spectators. "I think discotheque dancing is good. I love it personally," she says. "But a lot of people can't do it. Let's face it, it's good for the young."

Adds Bob Medeiros, who is dance instructor at Arthur Murrays and the American champion in Latin American dancing: "There's a lot of things older people can't wear that younger people can. It's the same with dance." He also says that ballroom dancing "makes older people look 20 years younger."

And if that's true, ballroom dancing is indeed progress.

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THANKS: To Alice Lattimore - Eskimo cookbook.

DIED: October 17, 1971, Harold Kilbrith, old-time fiddler and band leader.

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The Village Folk Dancers of Henniker, N.H. announce that they will hold dances on the THIRD Saturday of every month in the Congregational Parish House, 8:00 - 11:00 p.m. "Traditional folk and square dances with the beginner in mind; yet enough fun available to satisfy even the advanced pro." Come and see for yourself!

Plan to attend the 13th Annual New England Dance Convention, April 28-29, 1972, in Springfield, Mass.

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7  
CONTRA

DANCE

BACKGROUND



by RALPH PAGE

Part 2

### OUR EARLY SETTLERS

The English, Irish, and Scottish races constituted the largest numbers of early settlers in northern New England. All three races with an inborn love of dancing. All three races well versed in longways-type dances. The English and their highly developed longways dances. The Irish with their well-reveloped skill in music. The Scots with their highly developed techniques and exactness of steps in reels and longways. The Irish and Scottish people with their well-known fineness of holding to the old traditions and ways of their ancestors. Is it any wonder that contra dances flourished from the first in Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont? Is it to be wondered at that we still love them? With our preponderance of natives still of the same racial stock how could it be otherwise?

I know of no New England contra that is completely Irish in charactor and figures. The side-step ("seven and threes") which is the basic step in Irish dancing is entirely absent from our contras. The overall style of arms hanging loosely at the sides is a definite inheritance from Ireland. And I have seen a few old-time

dancers who "sashayed the center" with arms intertwined a la "wrap-around" figure from Irish dancing. Yet the music played for dozens of our dances is a direct importation from the Ould Sod.



### THE SCOTTISH INFLUENCE

The Scot, on the other hand, has had a big influence on the steps and figures of many of our line dances. Three favorites come quickly to mind: "Money Musk", "Petronella" and "Hull's Victory." The music that we play for Money Musk was written by a butler in the household of Sir Archibald Grant of Moniemusk, in the Lowlands of Scotland. History tells us that the butler's name was Daniel or Donald Dow, and apparently he was a musician of no mean ability, for an early collection of Scottish and Irish airs published by Bunting of London contains many tunes attributed to him. The dance was originally known as "Sir Archibald Grant of Moniemusk Reel," and as you would suspect, it was too unweildy a title to have a long life in this country and it was soon shortened to "Money Musk."

"Hull's Victory" is almost step for step the same dance as one known in Scotland as "The Scottish Reform". The same may be said for "Petronella." New England dancers for generations have called it "Pat'nella." Further proof of these statements may be found by reading the "Scottish Country Dance Books." The English also have an interesting "Money Musk." The Scottish dance "Strip the Willow" is an interesting version of "Virginia Reel," in turn a descendant of "Sir Roger de Coverly". A still closer relative to "Sir Roger" is the Scottish dance "The Haymakers."

"Pousette", and "Allemande", were both methods of progression in Scottish country dances, neither of which is practiced now in our New England contras,

though once they were common terms with us. Scores of our early contras had for their last figure a "Pousette". Many old manuscripts of the last century contain both terms over and over again. I have copies of several of these old dance manuscripts dated from 1795 to 1816 and they are full of combinations of dance terms half or two-thirds of which are English terms, and the remainder Scottish. An interesting bit of data it seems to me. That was just after the Revolutionary War and no doubt in many districts of New England the English were far from being loved, and other terms began to creep into our contra dances. Still others began to be omitted altogether and American substitutions replaced them. "Set" is one term in particular quite common in both English and Scottish dances, corresponding to the New England dance term "balance." Rarely if ever will you find the term in descriptions of our dances after 1820.

#### THE FRENCH-CANADIAN INFLUENCE

Within the past one hundred years New England has experienced another flood of immigration - the French-Canadians. Especially is this true of New Hampshire: thousands of French-Canadians from Quebec have poured across our borders, first to work in our lumber camps, later to become textile workers and shoe workers. This is also true in Maine, and less obvious in Vermont. So many are here in New Hampshire now that within another two or three generations, New Hampshireites of French-Canadian descent will outnumber all others. They are a delightful and fun-loving people who really love to sing and dance.

They have had little or no influence as far as bringing with them from Canada contra dances of their own. True, they have a well-known contra called "Brandy" that they are ready to dance at the drop of a hat. Other than that, their "contredansses" are few and far between. However, so adaptable are they in all things, that they have taken to our contras like young ducks to water, and their contagious laughter and mimicry is now mingled with Irish tunes and English and Scottish fig-

ures and everybody loves it immensely.



It is in the realm of music that their influence has been most important. French-Canadian fiddle tunes are used more and more for our New England dances, both square and contras. Some of our finest folk-musicians are of French-Canadian derivation and they are without peer in this field. A few of their tunes that come quickly to mind are: "Ste. Anne's Reel," "Glise a Sherbrocke," "Reel de Montreal," and "St. Lawrence Jig." We must not overlook Johnny Carrignan's playing of "Lord MacDonald's Reel," and "Alley Crocker." Anyone not willing to admit that Johnny Carrignan is the world's greatest fiddler is a biased idiot!

Without a doubt the French-Canadians have had the strongest influence on our long New England swings. To them should go the credit - or blame - for our frequent 8 to 16 count swings. You can't beat them when it comes to swinging. Beat them? You can't approach them! Not that we ever needed much incentive to indulge in a swing that is a swing. Two or three times around is considered a long swing in some sections of the United States, and they have a right to their opinion on the subject, but if we can't swing longer than that we refuse to be bothered with it at all! I have danced at French-Canadian weddings, and frequently the swings indulged in in their squares were of 16 measures of music. That is 32 counts outside of New England. I have been told, and I can well believe it, that sometimes they swing even longer!





## DANCING ACADEMIES & MUSICIANS

Up to the present generation of New England contra dancers the area was filled with "Dancing Academies" in which young men and women were taught not only the dances of the day, but etiquette and decorum as well. In smaller communities the dance schools were organized on a weekly basis, and occasionally on an alternate week basis, by a dancing master who set up a chain of dance schools, one to a town, and made a regular circuit on schedule. Many of these schools would conduct classes for two hours, followed by general dancing for all who cared to pay the admission price.

Following the American Revolution there were many French dancing masters who emigrated to this country in search of fame and fortune. None of them were more important than the native, John Griffith (later Griffiths) author of the first dance-book published in America, and the most influential dancing master of his generation. Among other places, he operated up and down the Connecticut River Valley as far north as Walpole, N.H. where he had published "A Collection of Contra Dances" in 1799. In the spring of 1787 he was at Hartford, Conn. where he remained for a season before moving on to near by Norwich. In February, 1788, he established himself at Providence, R.I., where on May 10 of that year his first book was published: "A Collection of the newest - and most fashionable country dances and cotillions. The greater part by Mr. John Griffith dancing-master, in

Providence." That fall he moved to Boston, Mass. where he remained for several years. 1794 found him teaching at Northampton, Amherst and Greenfield, all in Massachusetts. Besides booklets issued at Greenfield and Northampton in 1794, he published another at Hartford in 1797.

It was his Northampton book published in 1794 that proved so influential. It was a complete rewriting of his first publication, retaining but four of the dances in his first book: "Constancy", "Fisher's Hornpipe," "Griffith's Fancy" and "The Young Widow."

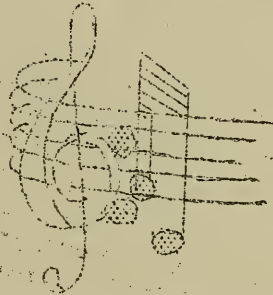
Griffith's importance was not so much because of his unusual activity or his pioneering in small towns which had never had a dancing master before, but in the fact that he published books, and that so many of his dances were pirated by other less talented dance teachers. So many of his dances are found in "A Select Collection," Otsego, N.Y. 1808, that it might be more to the point of the curious to list the ones omitted than all those put in. It is believed that Griffith put together the figures for "Fisher's Hornpipe", which was the most popular contra dance of the period.



We have never lacked for fiddlers capable of playing the proper tunes for our contras. This could be because of our racial strains - for you can find a touch of the Gael in many of our fiddlers. Itinerant fiddlers traveled over the countryside, sure to find a warm feeling of welcome wherever night found them. Word soon spread of the presence in town, and neighbors came from

far and near to listen - and oftentimes to dance a contra or two with the fiddler standing in an out-of-the-way corner of the room. After playing a few figures, the musician would "pass the hat", collecting from each man whatever could be afforded. The total amount collected decided how long the fiddler would continue to play.

For larger parties in the local Town Hall for the many balls, assemblies, or any other name you cared to give them, other instruments were added and the traditional orchestra of mother's day consisted of first and second violins, cornet, clarinet (that's the way they spelled it then), double bass, and, if the occasion warranted it, a cello and flute. My earliest recollection of dancing recalls an orchestra of two violins, clarinet, cornet and piano.



### TUNES, CARDS AND QUILTS

Playing cards of Revolutionary times often carried on their backs directions for contra dances. Some of them thus described were: "Stoney Point," "Hessian Camp," "The Retreat of Clinton," "The Defeat of Burgoyne", "Baron Steuben" and "The Success of the Campaign."

Even quilt patterns were not immune to our passion for dancing: "The Reel," "Swing to the Center," "Arkansas Traveler," "The Brown Goose," from the old play-party song "Go Tell Aunt Rhody Her Old Brown Goose is Dead" "Dusty Miller," "Eight Hands Around," "Lady of the Lake" "Nelson's Victory," "Road to Californy," "Rising Sun," "Shoo Fly," "Wild Goose Chase" - all these can be easily traced to the names of dances and/or dance tunes.

"The Spitfire," "Witch of the Wave", "California," "Excelsior," "Star of the East," "Derby," "Gamecock," were all names of famous clipper ships of a past era: they were also the names of contra dance tunes.

From quilts to clipper ships is a far cry indeed. What I am getting at is this: nothing was far removed from the contra dances of our ancestors. From weddings to wakes; from kitchen junkets to the "Cotillions;" from farm boy to bank president, all fell victims to the spell of the dance.

### AND YET THEY LIVE.....

For more than a half century, dance manuals did their best to kill contra dances. Such dancing masters as Elias Howe, Edward Ferraro, Wm. B. DeGarmo, C.H. Cleveland, Jr. and Thomas Hillgrove proclaimed bitterly against them and considered them unfashionable. Ball-room habitues in the big cities believed them but, characteristically, northern New Englanders paid no heed to such high falutin' flats, and continued dancing contras with as much verve and zest as ever; an excellent example of rural Americans being "their own man."

There are those who hold that Puritanism took the merriness out of "Merrie England," but it didn't take the merriness out of the stock that came from Old England to make New England. Neither did John Knox drive it completely from the minds and customs of the Scottish immigrants. Nor could Cromwell drive it out of the lives of Irish folk coming to America. Perhaps all this persecution only made our pioneer forefathers more determined than ever to carry on the customs of their native lands here in New England.

- the end -





# Saga Of A

## Square Dancer

by FERN WOOD

The Doctor looked the old man o'er  
He puckered up his lips,  
He rippled through his staff's reports,  
As though they were poker chips.  
The calcium in your bones is bad,  
You have a case of gout.  
Your blood is thin, it has no zip,  
Your lungs are near worn out.  
Your muscle tone is scarcely heard,  
Your eyesight has a quiver.  
Your stomach needs an overhaul,  
There's spots upon your liver.  
Take three pink pills when you get up,  
Four green ones at each meal.  
Two blue or brown or white or black,  
Depending on how you feel.  
Now any time you're feeling low  
Or hurry, strain or run....  
Take four red pills of dynamite,  
Your ticker's on the bus.  
This little book tells what to do,  
There are rules that you must keep.  
Just be in bed by nine o'clock,  
For eight good hours of sleep.  
The pills are setting on the shelf,  
The book has long since gone.  
The old man still is seen around,  
With nothing much gone wrong.  
His family now can't find him home,  
When his advice they seek.  
Because he's out to some square dance,  
Six nights of every week.



# VIOLIN

## VILLAGES



No musical instrument is deserving of greater care than the violin. A good one will last for centuries, and improve with age. A newspaper writer tells something of the people who make the best violins in Markneukirchen with its surrounding villages, Klingenthal, Fleissen, Rohrbach and Graslitz, in Saxony, where there are about fifteen thousand people who do nothing but make violins. The inhabitants, from the little urchin to the old, gray-headed man, the small girl and the old grandmother, are all engaged in making some parts of a fiddle.

A good instrument consists of sixty-two different pieces. The older men make the finger board from ebony, and the string-holder of the screws. The small boys make themselves useful by looking after the glue-pot. A man with strong, steady hands and a clear eye puts the pieces together, and this is the most difficult task of all.

The woman generally occupy themselves as polishers. this requires long practice, and a family having a daughter who is a good polisher is considered very fortunate.

Even a young man, when he goes a-wooing inquires whether the young girl is a good polisher and if she is it will certainly increase his affection for her at least twofold. The polishing takes a good deal of time, some of the best violins being twenty and even thir-

ty times polished.

Every family has it peculiar style of polishing, and never varies from that. There is one who makes nothing but a deep wine color, another a citron color, yet another an orange color, and so on.

The Youth's Companion 1/5/88

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### A BARGAIN IN VIOLINS

Two young men strolled into a flea market in San Jose, California, and offered to sell the owner, Travis G. Brigham, a used violin. Brigham agreed and paid the men \$30.

Later, he took the instrument to a violin shop to find its true worth. The \$30 fiddle turned out to be a Guarnerius made in 1703 and worth \$10,000. Brigham turned the find over to the police, who returned it to John C. Loutensock, second violinist for the Utah Symphony Orchestra. Loutensock had reported it stolen after a concert at Stanford University.

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Activities of the Country Dance Society, Boston Center -  
Wednesdays - English Country & Morris, YWCA Temple St.  
Cambridge, Mass. Leaders: Helene Cornelius and Renald  
Cajole. Classes: English Country 7:45 p.m. Morris 9:15  
Thursdays - "Drop-In" Evenings, American squares and  
New England contras; Guest leaders, Stebbin Hall, 3 Joy  
St. Boston, Mass. 8 - 10:30 p.m. All welcome.  
December 30 - Pre-New Year's Eve Square Dance Party, 3  
Joy St. Boston, Dick Delery, caller & M.C.  
January 29, 1972 - English Country Dance Party, YWCA,  
Temple St. Cambridge.

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## IRISH FOLK

## MUSIC TODAY

by NIALL SHANAHAN

Ireland has been building a folk heritage for centuries, and she hasn't stopped yet. The Irish harp, tin whistle, fiddle and uilleann pipes, the Irish dances, lirls, rebel songs, drinking songs, dance songs, and ballads have played a large part in the life of the Irish people and have given them a strong place in folk-music.

In today's Ireland, folk music still plays a part in the everyday life of the people. The popularity of even the most traditional song has not changed. The 1940's saw singers such as Delia Murphy who, at that time, recorded many of Ireland's traditional songs. The 50's and 60's have added people such as David Hammond and the McPeake Family (both of Belfast, N.I.), Pat Tunney, Seamus Ennis, and Joe Heany.



The Singing Clancy family of Carrick-on-Suir has given added popularity to Irish music in recent times; Pat, Tom, and Liam Clancy are internationally known for their singing. Although Joan Clancy Butler does not sing publicly anymore, Peg Clancy Power and her brother Bobby have recorded some songs which were passed down through the family. Now, the singing is being taken up by their sons and daughters, one of whom, Alice O'Connell, is already becoming known in Ireland.

Joe Heany, a fine traditional singer from the Irish-speaking West, could not make a living from singing in Ireland, since he felt that his songs would be more appreciated in the U.S. and so he left Ireland in May 1968. His loss is strongly felt. At the time he left Ireland, a Dublin newspaper columnist wrote of the loss in song and story and criticized the Gaelic cultural organizations for not, at least, maintaining him in Ireland so that he might use his talents to teach Gaelic songs to school children. Many consider Joe Heany to be Ireland's most important folksinger.



The record charts readily show the spot held by folkmusic in Ireland. The Dubliners and Clancys outsell the Beatles. One-third of all LPs sold in Ireland are by the Clancys. Very recently, the Dubliners and the Rolling Stones held separate concerts in Dublin. The Dubliners were the biggest draw. Even rock-and-roll bands play a lot of folk. There was a time earlier this year when there were three folk singles in the top-ten plus five folk LPs in the top-ten LPs.

A while back, Donagh MacDonaugh had a program on Radio Erin called "Ireland is Singing", which was concerned with the folkmusic of Ireland. This program had the highest listenership of all radio programs of the time. Radio Erin still devotes much time to programs of folklore and folksong of all aspects, and "Ireland is

Singing" has been replaced with a program of folkmusic around the world.

A Dublin paper has an extensive weekly column on the latest news concerning Irish folksingers and songs. Newspapers list place after place where ballad sessions and folk concerts are being held regularly.

The Flea Ceol na h'Eireann (the national folk festival) draws out 50,000 to 100,000 people, a very large turnout for a country with a population of three million. Aside from the national festival, six or seven others are held throughout Ireland during the year. These folk festivals offer competitions of various sorts, while impromptu concerts are apt to break out almost anywhere, in pubs, in fields, or in the streets.



The Clancys and Tommy Makem have introduced a somewhat commercial element into Irish folkmusic. But even at their most commercial, they represent a very living tradition in Ireland. There are very few songs that they've "popped" up; mostly, they are sung pretty much as they learned them. All the Clancys have added is the guitar and the banjo. The Clancys have also introduced many to folkmusic who have, in turn, become seriously interested.

Other singing groups have sprung up all over Ireland. Ballad-session advertisements in the newspapers list many groups with names such as The Croppies, Pedlars, Kinfolk, Bandeliers, The Blarney Folk, The Owen Roe Folk, The Corbies, Broadsiders, The Emeralds, The Jolly Tinkers, The Emerald Folk, The Moonshiners, Sweeney's Men, and many more. There are, at least, two different groups who call themselves The Irish Rovers.

One of the most popular groups is the Dubliners (Dublin City's most popular). They have many recordings

in Ireland and two thus far in the U.S. Their version of "Our Goodman" called "Seven Drunken Nights", was rated as number three in April of '68. Other groups are the Indlows whose recording of "The Sea Around Us" made one last year. The Tenians are a very good group, fast becoming popular. One of their members is Alice O'Connell (niece of Pat, Tom and Lian Clancy), who does some singing separately. This group recently won the Father Keating Cup at the Féile Gluain Meála (Festival of Conmel) for their fine performance for the third successive year.



Irish songwriters in the folk idiom are rare, but there have been new songs written. Bill Meek sings many of his own compositions along with some of the most traditional songs of Ireland. Bill's own are written and sung in such a traditional manner that often leaves the listener to wonder whether they are traditional or recent.

Tommy Makem, who sings with the Clancys, has tried his hand at writing songs and apparently likes it. A few of his songs have a folk sound, but it is rumored that he is pretty much straying from his folk tradition and has turned to writing pop songs. He has just recently cut an entire album of his compositions, and two of his works, "Freedom's Sons" and "Lord Nelson," may be heard on the latest Clancy Brothers and Tommy Makem album.



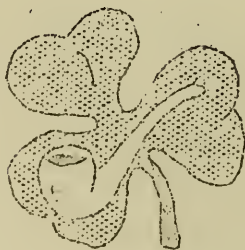
Irishman Paul Lenihan sings "We're Over Here for Exploration" with the Sect's group, The Exiles. It's a recent song which tells of the too many Irishmen who have been leaving their native land (even since its independence), to seek work elsewhere. But contemporary Irish songs of "protest" are very few.

It might be said that, among other things, folkmu

sic is a sound of a people; and the Northern Irish strongly feel the spirit of the Irish Republic. The Coiste Doillseanacain Naisiunta (National Publications Committee) in Cork urges the young people of Ireland to take pride in singing their songs for tyranny is still seen in British-occupied Ireland, and the ballad singer is unsuppressible. Although "Kevin Barry", for instance, is not legally banned in N.I., it is not wise to sing it too conspicuously for one may be brought in for "conduct liable to lead to a breach of peace." And oft times such songs do. A riot was caused at a N.I. dance just this last January when the band started playing "Merry Ploughboy." And N.I. is also where the popularity of the Clancys is due largely to the Nationalists (those Irishmen who want to see Ireland reunited).

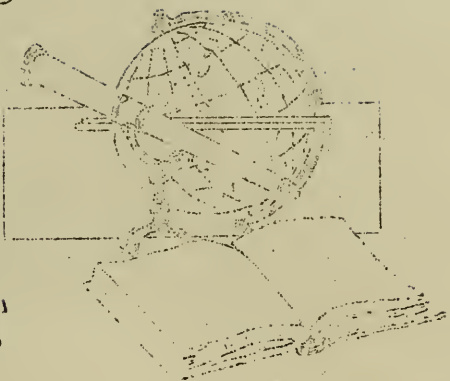
It is really hard to write about an Irish folk revival as everybody has different ideas about it. As in America, there is much appreciation for some poor singers, but then the whole movement draws more and more people towards traditional music.

Bill Meek's statement that Irish music had never declined enough to be in need of reviving has some truth, though the Clancys did put new life into it. A survey of the Irish scene would be really incomplete without a mention of the part played by Delia Murphy. In her day she was, if anything, even more popular than the Dubliners and the Clancys, traditional song probably played a far larger part in Irish life than in most other countries, and the revival only consolidated that position.





# SQUARE DANCING 'DOWN UNDER'



Square dancing has hit Australia with a do-si-do and a hoop-and-a-holler. The 13th national square dance convention was held recently in Perth, Western Australia, with a week of almost nonstop dancing.

The convention, held in Perth for the first time, drew dancers from more than 1,800 miles away.

An American caller named Joe Lewis, is credited with sparking the Australian' interest in 1947. A store in Sydney, New South Wales, featured Joe as an attraction. The public not only listened to the caller, but also began forming their own square dance groups.

The idea of a square-dance convention grew out of a competition in Canberra, the Australian capital. "Before it ended," said Bill Rolth, a founding member of the national-convention movement, "it turned into a convention, and we had planned regular annual meetings of the same type."

The conventions slowly grew until, by the fourth annual event, all the Australian states were represented. Today, the conventions attract up to 2,000 of the more than 5,000 dancers in the continent, including visitors from the United States, Canada and England.

The conference held in Perth featured discussions, round and square dancing in the morning, afternoon, and

evening, sightseeing, and several days of visiting country districts with, of course, more dancing.

Australian square dancers have modified traditional steps slightly Rolth explained. They don't hop as Americans do, preferring the slide-step and allemande grip in the turn. Such changes and decisions are made and voted on at the conventions in order to keep Australian dancing uniform.

The dress of the Down Under dancers is also different. The men used to wear brightly checkered shirts but now tend to wear plain colors to match their partners' dresses. The women, however, go all out in colorful outfits.

Dorothy Rolth says square dancing is an activity for all women. "Single women, such as widows, can have as good a time as anyone because of the community spirit in the group," she explained. "And mothers can bring their children. Other members of the group will look after the youngsters while their mothers dance, and when the children are older, they form their own squares."

\*\*\*\*\*

## YULE-CAROL CUSTOM GOES BACK CENTURIES

Singing Christmas carols is a custom so old that even the origin of the word is in doubt. The first carols were modeled on songs written to accompany the choris dance and caroling - a combination of dancing and singing - which found its way from pagan rituals into the Christian church.

In the year 589 A.D. the Council of Toledo forbade dancing in the church on certain days. The following year all secular dances in the church were forbidden. However, the custom did not die out until about 1209. In 1233 St. Francis of Assisi, encouraged composition of Christmas music which the congregation sang.

# YEAR END CAMP

Tues. Dec. 28 - Sun. Jan. 2

at

KEENE STATE COLLEGE

with

ANDOR CZOMPO - Hungarian Dances

CONNY TAYLOR - International Dances

ANN CZOMPO - Modern Jazz Dances

CHARLIE BALDWIN - New England Squares

RALPH Page - Contrabass & Lancers

COST: \$57.00 per person, plus lodging of your choice

YEAR END CAMP starts with supper Tuesday night, December 28, 1971 and closes with the noon meal on Sunday, January 2, 1972

The LLOYD YOUNG STUDENT UNION BLDG. will be the scene of all activities. We'll dance upstairs in the gym and eat our dinners, suppers & snacks downstairs in the cafeteria - sorry, no breakfasts!

REGISTRATION:- To assure a place at YEAR END CAMP, please send a \$15.00 deposit per person to ADA PAGE, 117 Washington St. Keene, N.H. 03431. Further information from above address. Or call 1-603-352-5006.

\*\*\*\*\*

FOLK DANCE HOUSE is now holding classes three nights a week at the

"V" HALL of the

Diocese Armenian Church  
630 Second Avenue  
Between 34th 35th Street  
N.Y.C.

Do NOT use the Cathedral entrance. There is a separate door in the stone wall, in the middle of the Avenue -  
THAT IS THE DOOR TO USE.

COME JOIN US FOR THE SAME KIND OF QUALITY FOLK DANCING for which Folk Dance House is famous. Mary Ann & Michael Herman will do most of the teaching.

Tuesdays 6-8 p.m. Early class for Intermediate folk dancing with thorough instruction for those with some experience.  
8:30 - 11 p.m. Fast Intermediate session, rapid teaching and review.

Wednesday - 6-8 p.m. for real beginners. A fun way to get started in folk dancing. Basic dances taught painlessly - you'll be dancing in no time at all.  
8:30 - 11 p.m. Late class. Advanced and practice sessions for those with much experience. Emphasis on style

Fridays - 8:30 - 11 p.m. Light folk dance fun. Easy intermediate, advanced. A real folk dance  
"come-all-ye"!

\*\*\*\*\*



# THE THISTLE

## A MAGAZINE FOR SCOTTISH DANCERS

Descriptions - Background - History

Sample backnumber on request

Quarterly \$1.25 from 3315 Fraser St. Vancouver 10, B.C.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Canadian Folk Dance Record Service now carries full lines of "DANCE ISRAEL" LP: also Bert Everett's book TRADITIONAL CANADIAN DANCES. Write for their listings:

185 Spadina Ave. Toronto 2B, Ontario, Canada

\*\*\*\*\*

### WANTED

Copies of old recipe books, the privately printed ones gathered together by Ladies' Aid Groups, Rebeckahs, or Churches & Granges. AND old dance & festival programs Convention Programs. Don't throw them away. Send them to me. I collect them as a part of a research project ALSO - any old-time dance music for violin or full orchestration. Dance music only, please. Send to:

Ralph Page, 117 Washington St. Keene, N.H. 03431

\*\*\*\*\*

Conny Taylor, 62 Fottler Ave. Lexington, Mass. announces a new FOLK DANCE RECORD SERVICE. For more complete information, call him at VO2-7144

\*\*\*\*\*

# FOR SALE

Swing Below - \$1.50

by Ed Moody - A Book On The Contra Dance

Musical Mixer Fun - \$1.00

by Ray Olson

Dancing Back The Clock - \$1.50

directions for 94 Old-Time English Round Dances

The Ralph Page Book Of Contra Dances - \$1.50

by Ralph Page - 22 dances plus suggested music

Let's Create Old-Tyme Square Dancing - \$2.50

by Ralph Sweet - A MUST book for serious callers

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200 dances - square, contra, folk - songs & recipes

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as taught by Paul & Gretel Dunsing

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favorite recipes at N.H. Folk Dance Camps

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favorite recipes of Monadnock Region of N.H.

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Order any of the above material from:

Ralph Page, 117 Washington St. Keene, N.H. 03431



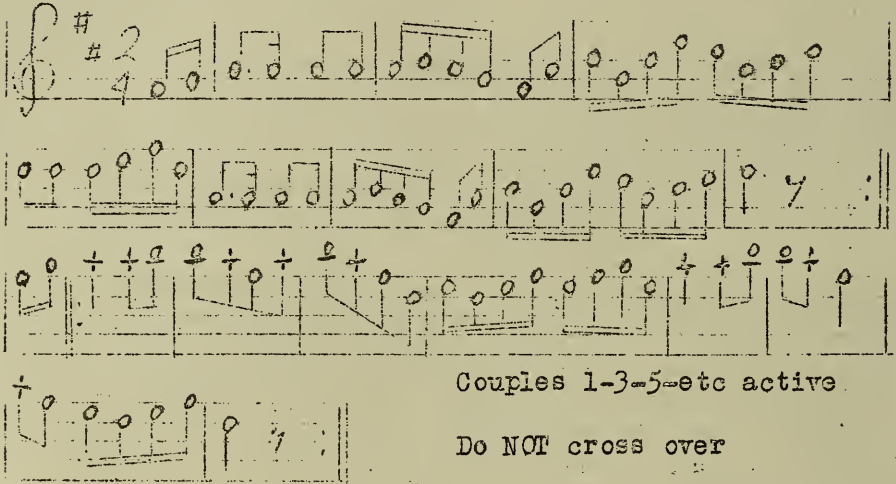
## A STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Another breakthrough is in the making for square dancing. Wenatchee (Wash.) Valley College Continuing Education Department is offering a Short Course on "The Fundamentals of Teaching Square Dancing." The course is designed to equip teachers for square dance instruction in primary and secondary education. The course will utilize the album series "Fundamentals of Square Dancing" by Bob Ruff and Jack Murtha in conjunction with Sets-In Order's teacher-caller manual entitled "The Basics of American Square Dancing." This short course will cost \$17.00 for 30 hours of instruction and will garner 2 credit hours. Classes will be on Monday and Wednesday nights from 7 to 10 p.m. in the East Wenatchee Elementary School beginning November 1st and continues five weeks. Instructor for the course will be Joe Guilford. Due to the nature of square dancing, this course is open to couples with the credit hours going to the registered individual. No charge will be made for the partner. The course is not designed to make square dancers out of school teachers, but to give them a working knowledge of modern square dancing. The course has no prerequisites and is open to all persons interested in teaching square dancing. A minimum of 12 students must register for the course to continue."Footnotes" v22n3.

# CONTRA DANCE

THE FOREST de BONDI

Music: "Forest de Bondi"



Couples 1-3-5-etc active

Do NOT cross over

Down the center with your partner  
 Turn as couples, the other way back  
 Cast off (man with lady, lady with man)  
 Left hand star with the same couple once around  
 Right hand star with same couple once around  
 Same two ladies chain (over and back)  
 Active couples forward and back and  
 Turn partner into place, below one couple ( $1\frac{1}{2}$  round)

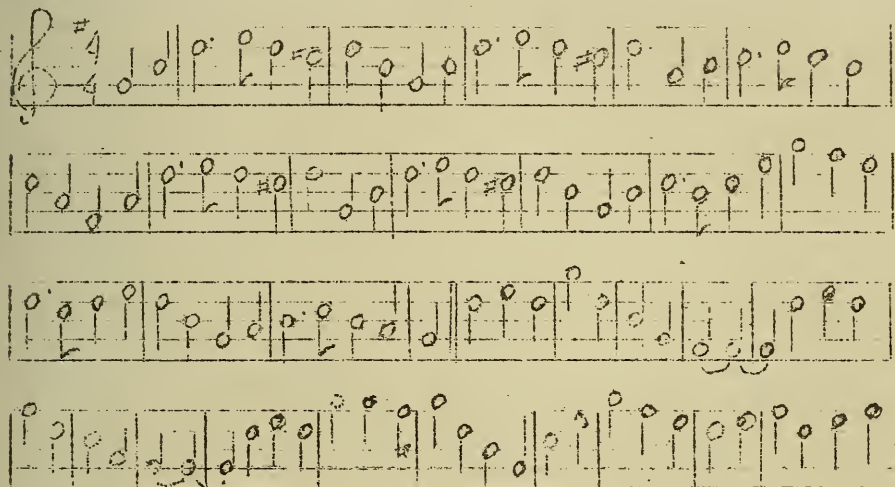
Dancing For Everybody at Community Church, 40 East 35th St. NYC, 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 7:30 - 10:30 p.m. Folk Dancing with Gene Meyers; Squares with Tony Parkes and guest callers. Beginners always welcome. AND Square Dance Workshop at First Church of Kew Gardens, N.Y. 3rd Fridays, 8-10:30 p.m. Squares in Depth with Tony Parkes More information from Tony Parkes, 123-30 83rd Ave. Kew Gardens, N.Y. 11415



# SQUARE DANCE

## YEAR END TWO-STEP

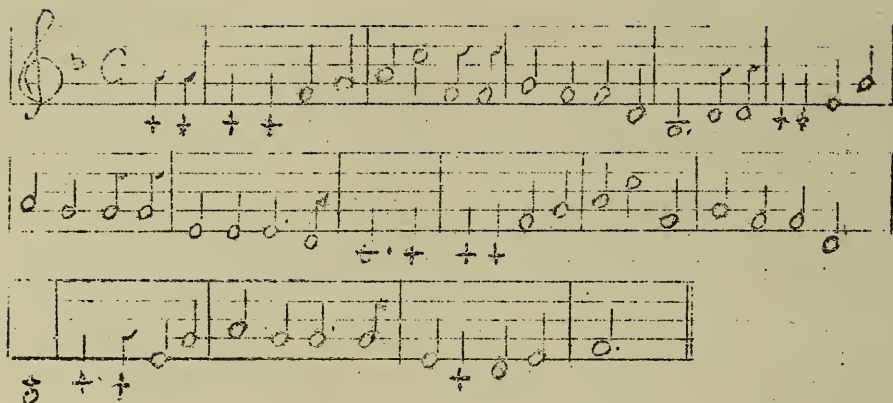
Original dance by Red Linnell; original music by R. Page



The two head ladies chain to the right  
 You keep that lady fair.  
 Two head couples out to the right  
 And ciecle left right there.  
 You circle left, go once around, with your left hand lady  
 Swing that lady, put her on your right swing  
 And circle left once more.  
 Head gents break and form a line  
 And the opposite ladies chain  
 Chain the ladies over but DON'T chain back again  
 Now forward all, the opposite swing  
 Because she is your own  
 You swing that lovely lady bcys, swing her right back home,  
 Repeat for sides. Ad lib intro. breaks & ending.

# FOLK SONG

## THE WABASH CANNON BALL



From out the wide Pacific  
To the broad Atlantic shore  
She climbs the highest mountains  
Up hill and by the shore,  
Although she's tall and handsome  
And she's known well by all  
She's a regular combination of  
The Wabash Cannon Ball.

Our eastern states are dandies,  
So the western people say,  
When she climbed Old Rock Island  
Took all her style away,  
To the lakes of Minnesota,  
Where the rippling waters fall,  
No changes can be taken on the  
Wabash Cannon Ball.



She came down from Birmingham  
 One cold December day,  
 As she pulled into the station  
 You could hear the people say,  
 There's the gal from Tennessee,  
 She is long and she is tall,  
 She came down from Birmingham, on  
 The Wabash Cannon Ball.

Just listen to the jingle  
 And the rumble and the roar,  
 As she glides along the woodland,  
 To the hills and by the shore,  
 Hear the mighty rush of the engine,  
 Hear the lonesome hobcocs' call  
 While she's traveling through the jungle  
 On the Wabash Cannon Ball.

Here's old man Daddy Claxton  
 May his name forever stand,  
 May it always be remembered  
 Throughout all the land,  
 His earthly race is over  
 And the curtains round him fall,  
 We'll carry him home to victory,  
 On the Wabash Cannon Ball.

\*\*\*\*\*

Folk Dance Fridays, Barhard College Gym, West 117th & Broadway, NYC. Teaching sessions 8 - 9:30 p.m. followed by Request Dancing, 9:30 - 12:00 p.m. Instructors: Elli Buk, David Henry, Martin Koenig. ALSO these two special evenings: December 30th, The Year-End Fare-Ye-Well and Folk Dance Ball, January 7th, 1972, An Evening in Poland, with Ada Dziewanowska.

You can obtain a free copy of the "New York City Folk Dance Directory" by requesting same from Raymond La-Barbera, 777 Foster Ave. Brooklyn, N.Y. 11230.

# FOLK DANCE

## IATROS

A Greek dance, as taught by David Henry

Record: "Songs of Epirus" (45 rpm) Side A-Sagorisios

Formation: Dancers in lines (or circle, for teaching purposes). Hands joined and held at shoulder height, with bent elbows pointing down.

M. 1 - Ct 1-2: Facing center: Step on R foot to R side  
-This can be done as a step on count 1 and hold on count 2, but it will be typically Greek if it is done by stepping with weight on ball of the foot on ct.1 & dropping onto the heel of the foot on 2. The same styling is used on the first step of each measure, in this way producing the "slow-quick-quick" rhythm of Greek dancing.

ct 3 Step on L foot behind R foot  
4 Step on R foot to R side.

then, facing slightly to R

M. 2 - Ct. 1-2 Step on L foot across in front of R ft.  
3 Step on R foot to R side  
4 Step on L foot in front of R foot.

Facing center again

M. 3 ct 1-4 Repeat footwork of measure 1  
4 ct 1-2 Facing slightly to R, step on L foot across in front of R foot  
3-4 Facing center, close R foot to L foot - keeping weight on L foot.



A variation of this dance has the first count of each measure a small lift on the standing foot - NOT UP, but in the direction of the next step. In this variation - the steps would therefore come on counts 2,3, and 4 rather than on 1,3 and 4. Caution: this variation should be tried only after thorough mastery of the basic dance probably by expert dancers who want a bit of a challenge. Dave emphasises styling in this dance. Greeks are a proud people and Dave said repeatedly: "Stand tall - and proud; dance strongly but gently, take small steps and think flat instead of up and down. DON'T BOUNCE8888 Think of the other dancers and make it a cooperative effort.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dates of the 1972 Maine Folk Dance Camps are as follows

June 17-23	July 8-14
June 24-30	August 18-25
July 1-7	August 26-Sept. 1
	Labor Day Weekend
	Sept. 1-4

Further information from Mary Ann Herman, P.O. Box 201  
Flushing, N.Y. 11352.

The Sixth Annual Peach Blossom Square Dance Festival will be held in Canajoharie, N.Y. Saturday, May 27 1972 Noon to midnight, featuring Earl Johnston & Dick Leger. Live music for the Saturday evening party.

\*\*\*\*\*

THANKS TO: Gay Mothershead - Seafood Seasoning  
Martin Bacharach - box of assorted jellies.

oxoxo

An old-timer was sitting in the waiting room for expectant fathers at the hospital, "Is your wife here?" a nurse asked him. "Not this time, Miss," he replied. "I just came to get some cigars."



## FROM A DANCER'S

### NOTEBOOK

"The Trary House, Deerfield, Massachusetts"

Old Time New England, January, 1933

At the head of the stairs is the ballroom, beautiful in its proportions, with arched ceiling and recesses, which, like the door and eight windows, are edged with a delicate rope moulding. A small balcony for the fiddlers was built at the end opposite the mantel. For this we thanked "Aunt Thyra," an old lady of the village, who asked if we had found "the cubby-hole" where she used to go to watch her father and mother dance. Patched plastering answered her question and disclosed the place made for the fiddler and the little girl. The approach originally was from the entry. Now it is from the room in front.

"The ballroom is lighted by candles in a graceful tin chandelier, once in a Vermont tavern, and also by sconces. We dance on the floor of 1765 and sit on the raised box-seats as did the ladies of that time. These, however, have not the hinged tops which allowed the grandmothers to place their red cloaks within.

"Although the newer part of the house had been occupied until 1890, this room fortunately had not been serious-

ly harmed in its days of lesser glory. Some partitions had been built but they did not reach the ceiling nor were the mouldings marred when the spaces on either side of the chimney became closets.

"Of course they came here to dance. I wish I knew more about it. The first date found (1799) is on the day that "Squire John Williams" wrote in his cash book: "1s. towards fiddlers at Erastus Barnard's wedding." This suggests thrift on the part of Erastus, for he was host as well as bridegroom, but that contributory method may have been customary. Invitations to dances in the year 1800 were printed on cards, and were sent in the names of "managers". It was the fashion of the day for these managers to seek their lady guests at their homes and to escort them to "the Room." Perhaps this was the reason for their early hours. Three of these card-invitations now hang in the ballroom. Here is one:

#### EXHIBITION BALL

The Honor of Miss Mercy Sheldon's  
Company is requested at  
E. Barnard's Hall at  
7 o'clock P.M.  
Deerfield, Sept. 2, 1802

"The next year she is "Desired to attend at 6 o'clock," and a "Public Ball," in June, 1803, begins at five o'clock P.M. Surely the farmer boys would find it more comfortable to begin at five P.M. than to finish at five A.M.! The manager's names are on the cards, varying from two to eight.

"Another party of 1812 is still talked about in Deerfield. To this "Aunt Annie Hinsdale," having no children of her own, invited to Barnard House twenty-four mothers of "the Street" to come with their twenty-four babies who had been born within the year.

"There never could have been a more beautiful ball in the house that the housewarming given by Miss Baker in

1892, to which she asked the village people to come in eighteenth-century costume. Later that summer, our mail carrier, expressing surprise to a visiting stranger, said: "You don't know Miss Baker! Never heard of her ball! why they came from Boston, New York, Springfield and the Adirondacks; they had hairdressers and costumers and they danced the mignonette." It was not the mignonette, but the pavane, older, prettier, and much more intricate than the minuet. It was, however, less difficult to learn than the country dances which a few older women and "Old Put", the colored fiddler, struggled to teach us. We did "Hull's Victory," "The Ladies' Triumph" and "Chase the Lady." That night we began at eight o'clock and finished at dawn."



The Cobleigh Tavern, Lisbon, N.H.

"Old Time New England, October, 1933"

"This two-story building, having a frontage of eighty feet, was set squarely behind the old blockhouse, facing the road. The upper story consisted of one great room and two smaller ones. The large room was the particular glory of the house. It was called the ballroom, and was fifty-five by twenty-five feet in length and width. It boasted an arched ceiling precisely like the famous one at Sudbury Inn and like that place had narrow benches fastened to the side walls. Though designed as a ballroom, it served not only as a house of entertainment, but as a town hall, a voting place, a Masque



Headquarters and a place of general public convenience."

## The Old Time Tavern

### Chap. XV "The Stage Driver"

"In England the coachmen and coaches had an Annual Parade, a coaching-day, upon the Royal Birthday, when coach-horses, coachmen and guards all were in gala attire. In America similar annual meetings were held in many vicinities. In Concord, New Hampshire, which was a great coaching centre, an annual coaching parade was given in the afternoon and a "Stagemen's Ball" in the evening. "Knights of the whip" from New Hampshire and neighboring states attended this festival. The ball was held in the celebrated Grecian Hall - celebrated for its spring floor - which was built over the open carriage-houses and woodsheds attached to the Eagle Coffee house, called now the Eagle Hotel. The dancing hall built in 1827, took its name from the style of its architecture. At one end was a great painting of the battle of New Orleans, with Jackson on horseback. It was the rallying point for all great occasions - caucuses, conventions, concerts, even a six weeks' theatrical season."

### Taverns and Stagecoaches of New England, vol. 1

"The Coach Parade and Stagemen's Ball in Concord (N.H.) had been held each winter since back in 1829; and to it came Knights of the Whip from all over New Hampshire and neighbor states, men right up at the top of the game.

"The "crew" of the "Flyer" including the wife and son came to town as the visiting drivers and friends were calling on Lewis Downing and his partner, Abbot, who stopped work in their shop to watch the parade.

"Picking up our women to join the rest in gay bonnets, hoods and furs in the line of coaches and sleighs, we formed behind the Fire Band and all pranced down Main

Street, with jingling harness and flourish of horns.... the ball was right there in the Grecian Hall, built over the Eagle coach sheds. I am no man to describe such things, but most of the drivers wore long pants fitting close to their shoes, tail coats and blue, red or yellow vests, while the women and girls had flowers and ribbons and bows of velvet in their hair, and dresses with skirts so big that in dancing they billowed out on the floor. Supper was sumptuous....for dancing the hall had a spring floor, and you could soon feel it rise and fall under the weight of a hundred and sixty couples of husky drivers and their daughters, sweethearts and wives, dancing polkas, waltzes, jigs and reels.



"The New Hampshire Patriot's earliest mentioned ball given by the stagedrivers of that and surrounding towns was on February 3, 1837. The stagemen had a splendid Ball at the Eagle Coffee House in this town on the evening of Friday, last week. It was numerously attended, and embraced as many elegantly dressed and beautiful ladies, and hale goodlooking gentlemen as we have seldom seen collected on a similar occasion. The Governor was present and participated in the festivities of the occasion, as well as many others not of the profession. The music was superb, the entertainment excellent, and every thing went off much to the satisfaction of all concerned."

"It would be interesting if a description had been handed down listing the various decorations connected with stagedriving that must have ornamented the walls at these parties, carrying out the scheme of decorations placed around the halls in which the Hunt Balls used to be held.

"The following report appeared in the same newspaper on January 13, 1840: "The Stagemen's Ball, held at the

Eagle Coffee House last Friday evening, was attended by one hundred and fifty couples, and every thing was done up in the neat and elegant style, peculiar to the gentlemen of the whip on such occasions. The entertainment provided by Walker was excellent, the music first rate, and the assembly of ladies brilliant.

"Short mentions were made of Annual Balls between the years 1845 and 1846, some taking place at the Washington Hotel but more frequently at the Eagle, the attendance varying from 76 to 175 couples.

"The Historical Society (N.H.) also possesses a program of a "Cotillion Party" held at the Eagle Coffee House on December 28, 1838, a spread eagle surmounting the invitation. The event was scheduled to begin as early as five o'clock. It was not held primarily for stage drivers but doubtless a few of the "swellest" of their set took this opportunity to enjoy the relaxation after a hard day over the wintry roads.

"One of our office force, Miss Alice G. Higgins, has made a search in various local newspapers and has discovered an account of a stagemen's dance held in Haverhill, New Hampshire, about which the Haverhill Republican wrote "that the Stagemen's Ball which came off on the 13th inst. was a splendid affair - dance, supper, and all connected therewith, reflecting much credit upon the 'Gentlemen of the Whip' and the host of the Exchange Hotel.' This town was an important coaching center."



## PAINLESS

## FOLKLORE



## AT THE SCOLD'S HELM

Wondrous strange are the instruments of punishment found described in records of bygone days. Crimes were numerous, one could not even talk too much, and there were a number of torturous devices used in punishing the "scold" generally female, who reviled, or cursed, or gossiped indiscreetly.

The "brank" or "gossip's bridle" or "scold's helm" was a shocking instrument, a sort of iron cage, of great weight, made to cover the entire head, with a spiked plate of iron, which was placed in the mouth, over the tongue. The mouthpiece was immovable, any movement of the tongue resulting in a cruelly cut mouth. And this punishment was often unjustly meted out to citizens who merely spoke a word against some established institution, possibly a wife who scolded her husband for having spent all his pay when there were hungry mouths to feed.

There were, of course, vicious gossips, and foul-mouthed blasphemers who undoubtedly deserved punishment of some sort. But there was no one who ever deserved that punishment voiced above.

Added to the physical pain of the bridle was the mental torture occasioned by the fact that, the device having



been padlocked in place, the offender was led, defenseless and speechless, chained to a magistrate through the town.

## DAY OF THE DISTAFF



The very word distaff falls today on many ears unfamiliar with its meaning. Yet before the spinning wheel was invented, the distaff was an important instrument in hands of countless women, or, had they naught else to occupy their time, there was always the distaff. The distaff was a rod or staff about three feet long which had a cleft end. It was used for holding the wool, cotton, flax, or other material from which the thread was drawn (though the modern spinning wheel which fulfills the same function is called the distaff).

Using the distaff as of your is the oldest method of spinning. It is still used in some parts of the world. The lower end of the distaff is held between the left arm and side, and the thread, passing through and gauged by the fingers of the left hand, is drawn out and twisted by the fingers of the right, at the same time being wound on a spindle made to revolve like a top to complete the twist.

Using the distaff was a pleasant and graceful occupation which did not interfere with conversation. It is easy therefore to see how the distaff in use must have been rather popular with the women of old-time families. In early days of our country, so widespread was the use of the distaff by women that it became commonplace to refer to the female side of the family as "the distaff side."

As Christmas began to win its way among people who had

formerly opposed its observance as a corruption of the Church of England, the Christmas season became a time when the women would lay aside their distaffs to take on the pleasant duties associated with the celebration. Not until after Little Christmas or Old Christmas, which ended on Twelfth Night (the Epiphany, January 6) was the use of the distaffs resumed.

### CRANBERRY HOOPS

Cranberry hoops are not made from cranberries. Rather, a cranberry hoop is a simple and ingenious device for telling quickly how many barrels of the little red berries a bog owner may expect from a given bog. It was invented twenty-five years ago by Russell Trufant, a cranberry grower in South Carver, on the South Shore. It is an adjustable hoop. This is towed anywhere on the bog, and the number of cranberries growing within its circumference is counted. Other things being equal such as favorable weather - enough rain, no frost, plenty of sun - the number of barrels is denoted by the number of berries thus counted. Fifty berries means a probable yield of fifty barrels of berries to an acre. Of course, in using the hoop, the grower is also guided by his year-to-year record of what his bogs have actually produced. It is said that when Uncle Sam asks the growers how many barrels they forecast for a season, the growers come right up with the answer and are seldom out of the way by more than one or two barrels. So good is the hoop!

### CAPE COD EPITAPH

There once was a Cape Cod farmer who wrote his own epitaph, and in it he referred affectionately to his two wives, each of whom he had survived. The epitaph read as follows:

"One was Tillie, and one was Sue,  
Both were loyal, faithful and true;  
But I hope my friends from Adam to Willie  
Have laid me out so I tilt toward Tillie."

## LEATHER THROATS

Our New England ancestors must have been tough old codgers with throats of tanned leather. Here are three drinks they used to pour down them:

1. Creamed Flip, made of equal parts of rum, strong black molasses, and dried pumpkin into which a red-hot poker was thrust to make it foam and bubble and impart the genuine flavor.

2. Scotchem: apple brandy, boiling water, and a generous dash of mustard. Apparently the only thing they didn't put into their likker was cholorphyl.

3. Mumbo: rum, water, and loaf vermont. Any cold night try one of these. Then go straight to bed and dream about your hardy ancestors!

\*\*\*\*\*

There once was a native of Brewster  
Who was annoyed too much by a rooster  
So he cut off his head  
Until it was dead  
And now it don't crow like it yewster.



There was an old fellow named Green  
Who grew so abnormally lean  
And flat and compressed  
That his back touched his chest  
And sideways he couldn't be seen.

\*\*\*\*\*

If you have your clothes mended on your back, you will come to want.

There is never a good hand at cards until the four of clubs is in it.

If a burglar carries in his pocket a piece of charmed coal, he will be able to defy authority.

## DO YOU REMEMBER?

When railroad passenger cars had a stove at each end?  
 When you smoked "Duke's Cameo" cigarettes and the bunch of paper-holders that came in the package?  
 When barn cupolas were sometimes as big as present day bungalows?

When you could get good board and room for \$4.00 per week?

When the women folks bought cotton cloth by the bolt?  
 When nothing short of a flood or tempest of calamitous proportions would provoke the holding of one session of school?

When deer keys were so large they were jointed in order to fold up in your pockets?

When father and mother had their pictures taken together, father was comfortably seated, while mother stood up?

When there were thistle-down picture throws in almost every parlor?

When the girls pretended to be horrified by stories which were a "little off"?

When the proprietor in person would keep his store open in the evening?

When the grocery man thought you were mad at him or something if you didn't help yourself to crackers and cheese?

When, with your overcoat over your arm on a Sunday, a pack of cards spilled out in the vestibule of the church and somebody said, "How's that for high?"

When your only preparation for winter sports was to take a barrel stave, a piece of board and a block of wood and make a jumper?

Do you remember? Really, it wasn't so long ago!

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## IMPROBABLE THINGS YOU KEEP HEARING ABOUT

Dining on the house, getting on someone's nerves, reaching for the moon and having your head in the clouds. Catching a waiter's eye, knitting your brows, paying a penny for someone's thoughts and buttering someone up.

Hitching your wagon to a star, grasping an opportunity, eating humble pie and extending an olive branch.

Working your head off, having a frog in your throat, asking for trouble, and keeping an ear to the ground.

Bending someone's ear, making both ends meet, feathering your nest and being knocked over with a feather.

## TONGUE TWISTERS

Three gray geese in the green grass grazing; gray were the geese and green was the grazing.

If a doctor is doctoring a doctor, does the doctor doing the doctoring have to doctor the doctor the way the doctor being doctoring wants to be doctoring - or does the doctor doctoring the doctor, doctor the doctor the way he usually doctors?

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## OLD TIME ADVERTISEMENT

What It Does: Hoods Sarsaparilla

1. Purifies the blood.
2. Creates an appetite.
3. Strengthens the nerves.
4. Makes the weak strong.
5. Overcomes that tired feeling.
6. Cures scrofula, salt rheum, etc.
7. Invigorates the kidneys and liver.
8. Relieves headache, indigestion, dyspepsia.

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# NEW ENGLAND

## HUMOR



We were talking to a fellow we know about an old Yankee who had died a few years ago. The old man had lived a good life - fishing, hunting, carving things out of wood. He'd inherited a little property, and when the wolf got too close he'd sell a small piece of it. He loved people and was sincerely mourned when the end came a couple of years ago.

Looking down at his picture, we mused upon what sort of person he must have been to live in quiet obscurity, apparently untroubled by a Yankee compulsion to get ahead. "Was he very bright?" we asked.

"Bright?" replied our friend. "He was bright enough to live 80 years without working - are you?"

The following anecdote has been handed in to us from several places. Scene: country store; proprietor is taciturn New Hampshire merchant of the old school. Enter a prosperous looking city fellow who purchases big cigar and proceeds to light same.

"No smokin' allowed in here," says the proprietor, mentioning to a sign posted prominently on the wall.

"Whaddaya mean, no smoking!" blusters the stranger. "You sell cigars, don't you?"

"Ayuh," says the storekeeper quietly. "Sell toilet paper too."

A rugged old bricklayer and builder was heard to say, when finishing up a job for some city people: "Well, that's good enough if they have to hire it done!"

OxO

Without any signal whatsoever, the ancient automobile turn left, and - too late - an oncoming driver applied his brakes. Feelings were more hurt than either of the cars.

"Why didn't you signal?" demanded the stranger.

"Humph," said the old-timer, "Everybody knows I turn here."

OxO

When lawmakers arrived in the state capitol, Concord, N.H. for the opening of the 1945 session, they were greeted by this advertisement from a local funeral parlor:

"Welcome to members of the Legislature. We are glad you're here. Please call on us for any service we can render you."

OxO

One of the earliest laws of the New Hampshire colony required men to cut their hair short "that they might not resemble women."

OxO

An old deed conveying property in Grafton County, N.H. reads: "Beginning at a stick in a hole in the ice....."

OxO

An expression heard in Walpole, N.H. is "betimes", which seems to mean occasionally: "Betimes I have to get off into the woods to be alone and breathe my own breath."

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## A NEW ENGLAND

### CLAMBAKE

The oldest eating tradition along New England's rocky shore line is the clambake, a legacy from the Indian tribes. In the three centuries that the tradition has been honored by New Englanders the form and method of the bake have remained essentially unchanged. Basically it consists of green corn, clams, lobsters, and fish closely covered and steamed in seaweed over white-hot stones to a medley of goodness that has not its equal this side of paradise.

The modern clambake is apt to include foods not known to the Indians - sweet potatoes, chicken, crabs, eggs, butter for the clams, coffee for the follow-up, and such latterday trappings as cheesecloth, paper bags or wire baskets to confine the separate foods, but fundamentally, the clambake has withstood the advances of civilization and mechanization.

Every bakermaster has his own opinion on how to conduct the preliminary stages of a clambake, but the general working procedure shapes up to something like this: A fire of wood is burned in a shallow pit over layers of stones about the size of cabbages. When the stones are crackling hot (after an hour or so of exposure to intense heat), embers and ashes are swept away and a



layer of wet seaweed or rockweed is laid on top of the stones to a depth of several inches. Ingredients follow in this approximate order - well scrubbed clams (a dozen or more per serving), followed by a second layer seaweed; ears of corn stripped to the inner husks and cleaned of silk; fish, preferably bluefish, in paper bags; lobsters (at least one per serving), arranged side by side; broiler chickens, if you must. Four to six inches of seaweed are now laid snugly over the food and the imposing heap is closely shrouded with a clean wet canvas. The edges of the canvas are weighted down with stones and the tiniest apertures are plugged with seaweed. For an hour - some experts allege a longer time is allowable - the pungent steam of seaweed and clam penetrate the edibles. The tantalizing aroma seeps slowly through the containing canvas with stimulating effect on the taste buds of the waiting company. Appetites may be appeased with relishes - sliced cucumbers, tomatoes - hot rolls, and cups of clam broth. (Each different kind of the food is separated by a layer of the seaweed). Then with the ceremonial lifting of the canvas the banquet is ready. Plates are piled high. Melted butter daubs unheeding chins.

For small family-size clambakes variations on the standard procedure are permitted, and a barrel or wash-boiler is an acceptable container for the bake. A wooden-shaped barrel is recommended and a lining of sheet-metal scraps will prevent the hot stones from igniting its sides. For the best results the barrel must be sunk in sand, the deeper the better. The washboiler clambake is an admittedly weak facsimile of the genuine article. The traditional foods are layered atop a rack placed in the bottom of the boiler over an inch or so of water. The lid must fit tightly. Cooking is over an open fire. And to be certain that everyone will have as many steam ed clams as he wants, it is best to prepare an auxiliary supply.



## HELPFUL HINTS

To restore some of the sharpness to a dulled wall can-opener, place it in boiling water for several minutes, then dry well.

Sandpaper will be useable for a longer time, work better and resist cracking if the paper backing is dampened slightly.

Stainless steel should be dried after it is washed, and not allowed to drip dry.

Deeply cut or etched glassware can be cleaned and brightened by scrubbing it with a baking soda solution and a soft brush.

For careless youthful eaters, substitute a disposable sheet of aluminum foil for the place mat that would have to be washed after each meal.

To keep petals from falling from cut flowers, try adding 1 teaspoon of sugar and 1 of vinegar to each quart of water.

You can repair a leaky garden hose by covering the spot with pliable roof paint.

When moving heavy furniture, put old socks on the legs to avoid scratching the floor.

To even the straws on a worn broom, soak it for ten minutes in hot water and then trim with shears while it is still wet.

Dark colored hose should be turned inside out before machine washing so that any lint will not show on the outside.



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DIED

PAUL DUNSING

December 12th 1971

Requiescat in pace

